

## In the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A timber pile connector comprising:

a section of pipe, said section of pipe having a continuous sidewall and a hollow bore, said section of pipe having a pair of opposing slots through said sidewall, said slots being oriented generally perpendicular to the hollow bore,

a bar, said bar having a lengthwise dimension,

a first end of said bar having a first cut therein to thereby form a first upper retaining member and a first lower retaining member,

a second end of said bar having a second cut therein to thereby form a second upper retaining member and a second lower retaining member,

said bar passing through said opposing slots,

said first and said second upper retaining members bent upward against an outer surface of said side wall of said section of pipe, and said first and said second lower retaining members bent downward against said outer surface of said sidewall, whereby said retaining members fixedly secure said bar in said slots to thereby form a penetration barrier in said section of pipe.

2.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 1, wherein said first upper retaining member is opposite said second lower retaining member, and said second upper retaining member is opposite said first lower retaining member.

3.(original) The timber pile connector of claim 1, wherein said first upper retaining member and said first lower retaining member are of substantially equal width, and said second upper retaining member and said second lower retaining member are of substantially equal width.

4.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 1, wherein said bar has a substantially flat configuration.

5.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 4, wherein said bar is about 2 1/2 inches wide and about 1/8 inch thick.

6.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 1, wherein said section of pipe is substantially cylindrical.

7.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 2, wherein said first upper retaining member and said first lower retaining member are of substantially equal width, and said second upper retaining member and said second lower retaining member are of substantially equal width.

8.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 7, wherein said bar has a substantially flat configuration.

9.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 8, wherein said section of pipe is substantially cylindrical.

10.(Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a timber pile connector for use in splicing timber pilings together in substantially axial alignment, comprising:

providing a section of pipe having a continuous sidewall and a hollow bore,

forming a pair of opposing slots through said sidewall of said section of pipe, said slots being oriented generally perpendicular to the hollow bore,

providing a bar, said bar having a lengthwise dimension, a first end of said bar having a first cut therein to thereby form a first upper retaining member and a first lower retaining member, a second end of said bar having a second cut therein to thereby form a second upper retaining member and a second lower retaining member,

passing said bar through said opposing slots,

bending said first and said second upper retaining members upward against an outer surface of said side wall of said section of pipe, and

bending said first and said second lower retaining members bent downward against said outer surface of said sidewall, whereby said retaining members fixedly secure said bar in said slots to thereby form a penetration barrier in said section of pipe.

11.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said first upper retaining member is opposite said second lower retaining member, and said second upper retaining member is opposite said first lower retaining member.

12.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said first upper retaining member and said first lower retaining member are of substantially equal width, and said second upper retaining member and said second lower retaining member are of substantially equal width.

13.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said section of pipe is substantially cylindrical.

14.(Original) The timber pile connector of claim 13, wherein said bar is about 2 ½ inches wide and about 1/8 inch thick.

15.(Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said section of pipe is substantially cylindrical.

16.(Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising welding said retaining members to said outer surface of said section of pipe.